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# **Background Report: Economic Development Element of the New Town Plan**

September 8, 2004  
Planning, Zoning and Development Department

L e e s b u r g

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Respectful of the Past  
*Mindful of the Future*

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## **Background Report: Economic Development Element of New Town Plan**

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This report is written to provide a basis for the preparation of the Economic Development Element of a new Leesburg town plan. The report summarizes the economic element of the 1997 Leesburg Town Plan and compares the policies and objectives found therein to the economic development recommendations made by the community at the sector and visioning meetings conducted by the town in the summer and fall of 2003. A summary of the recommendations collected at these meetings was reported to the Planning, Economic Development, and Environmental Advisory Commissions, and members of the community on June 17, 2004, at the “Workshop on Public Comment Themes.”

This report also assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the 1997 Town Plan related to its coverage of economic issues. Relevant sections of the Loudoun County General Plan are summarized to determine how the policy guidance for Loudoun County compares with the economic goals and objectives of the Town. In addition it includes a review of existing conditions and trends to determine how changing economic conditions might affect the goals, objectives and policies of the new element. The report addresses the above information with a series of findings that suggest guidelines for the content of a new economic element and concludes with a set of draft goals and objectives.

### **Summary of the Economic Element of the 1997 Town Plan**

The economic element can be divided into two major sections, one describing the Town’s economy and the other presenting the Plan’s goals, objectives, and action program related to economic development. The description of the economy presents data about Town industries and employment and a discussion of the various resources available for economic development. Those two items are discussed immediately below. The goals and objectives are summarized in the following “Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies Compared to Community Issues and Themes” section of this paper.

The element presents data on employment by industry in the Town, a listing of the Town’s major employers, and data on how and where the Town’s residents are employed. All of that information, including the historical data and projections for future jobs, is useful and should be updated in the new town plan. However, additional material and discussion of jobs and industries in the Town would have also been helpful. For example, the element would have benefited from a presentation of how the Town’s economy relates to the region. Another example is that there is no mention of the tourism sector, although one of the element’s goals specifically addresses tourism. In general, the element does not present a clear picture of the Leesburg’s economy so that the Town can make decisions about specific economic development activities.

The description of the various economic development resources addresses physical, human, financial, community, and institutional resources available to the Town. Although much of this is useful information, the new plan need not address all of these resources and should improve upon others.

Some of the Town Plan presentation echoes in more general language what had previously been presented (such as the labor force as a human resource), some is interesting information that is more of a distraction than a helpful discussion of resources (such as the list of institutional resources that ranges from the state Department of Business Assistance to the Dulles Area Association of

Realtors), and some could be more specifically defined in order to better inform policies (such as the discussion of land under physical resources that considers all nonresidentially zoned land as a single unit).

## **Analysis of 1997 Town Plan Goals and Objectives**

This section addresses the economic development goals, objectives, and policies (when applicable) presented by the 1997 Town Plan. The Plan's six goals and eighteen objectives often address more than one issue and could be classified in any number of ways. The following grouping both distills the policy statements into a manageable number and roughly correlates with the themes under which public comments from the 2003 summer and fall town plan meetings have been organized. This section discusses the Plan's policy statements in light of the public comments, draws some conclusions from a comparison of the two, and recommends how those policies should be dealt with in the new town plan.

### **Diversity**

One of the goals calls for the retention and expansion of a diversified economic structure and employment base, and another goal seeks to sustain the Town's fiscal health through a diverse and expanding commercial tax base. Diversity is implied in another goal, calling for job opportunities for present and future needs, and in two other goals that address two (government and tourism) sectors of the economy. Similarly, several objectives imply diversity, such as ensuring adequate land for commercial and industrial uses and recruiting businesses that are compatible with Town objectives.

**Accomplishments:** As discussed above, the 1997 Town Plan has several goals and objectives that imply economic diversity. However, no detailed policy or action was developed in the plan regarding what the Town defines as economic diversity. Up to this point, the market and not the Town has managed the economic structure of the community.

**Related Community Issues and Comments:** Several public comments directly sought a diverse economy for the Town. Often that desire was expressed as a way to ensure the Town's tax base and fiscal strength, although it was also determined to be a good way to provide job opportunities. However, most supportive of the idea of diversity was the sheer variety of specific suggestions for economic growth—more industry, more high technology, more tourism, more shopping opportunities. Only one comment, which was generally supported by others in the small group where it was made, suggested a limit on economic diversity; that person did not want to see “smokestack” manufacturing. Another limit was a basis for comments that encouraged the departure of Barber and Ross; that construction firm, and presumably others like it, were seen as not being viable in Leesburg's real estate market, not returning sufficient tax revenues, and not providing high enough wages. Of course, about as many people at the meetings did not see those problems and called for the Town to make special efforts to retain the company.

**Conclusion:** There was much community input on diversifying the Town's economic structure, and the public comments are in line with the Town Plan's goals and objectives.

**Recommendation:** The continuing diversification of the town's tax base has proven to be a sound goal and should be carried over to the new plan.

The economic development element of the new town plan could attempt to address diversity in more specifics—for example, recognizing that certain industries are not economically viable here, and identifying locations that are suitable for specific types of commercial development. The latter would also be addressed in the future land use map of the land use element. Objectives with such specificity would in turn lead to more specific implementation techniques, thus giving better direction to the Town on how the general goal of diversity can be achieved.

### Sectors

The economic development goals of the 1997 Town Plan address only two sectors of Leesburg's economy. One seeks to maintain the Town's "role as the county's governmental center," and the other calls for improvements in the Town's "position as a tourist, conference, and commercial center for Loudoun and the region." One objective addresses the needs for land for development of "commercial and industrial uses." More sectors are mentioned in the elements implementation program—high technology and mixed uses, as well as tourism-related businesses such as specialty retail, entertainment, and cultural programs.

**Accomplishments:** The Town has maintained its role as the government center of Loudoun County. The majority of the County offices remain located in the Town's corporate limits. The main Government Center, Parks and Recreation Department, and the expanding Courts Complex are located in the historic downtown district. Additional office facilities such as fire, police, and public works are located at the Loudoun Government Center adjacent to the Leesburg Airport.

The Town has emerged as the tourist center of Loudoun and is emerging as the retail center Loudoun as well. The Town has yet to position itself as Loudoun's conference center but with the growing tourism and retail bases the opportunity remains. Several accomplishments have occurred since the 1997 Town Plan that supports these trends and are listed as follows.

- Leesburg Crossroads marketing strategy,
- Leesburg Historic Walking Tour,
- Cultural events such as First Friday Gallery Walk; and
- Completion of the Town's Business Development Strategy for Leesburg has assisted in implementing the Town's way finding program and impending redevelopment of the Barber and Ross site (in the Crescent District).

**Related Community Issues and Comments:** Public participants were exuberant in their variety of economic sectors that they saw as important to Leesburg's future.

High technology was probably most often mentioned, and research and development in various forms was often mentioned in tandem with that. Tourism and education were also brought up many times. Finally, some participants listed light industrial, large and small offices, and a variety of retail and entertainment uses.

**Conclusion:** There was much community input addressing a variety of sectors in the Town's economic structure, and the public comments are in line with the Town Plan's goals and objectives. On the one hand, the public comments recognized a wider variety of sectors that Leesburg should accommodate.

This supports the goal of diversity discussed in the previous subsection. On the other hand, such variety only exacerbates the lack of focus found in the Town Plan.

**Recommendation:** The new town plan should provide as much information as possible about the structure of the region's and Town's economy to provide a clear understanding of the what industries would be most probable in the future and what industries best complement and support the community socially, financially, aesthetically, and environmentally. While the plan could recognize that a variety of economic sectors may play a role, thus allowing for diversity and adaptability over time, the plan should also identify those sectors for which the Town is prepared to devote special attention in encouraging. As often as possible, the plan should be as specific as possible in identifying locations for the various industries.

### Places

Only two places are identified in the economic development policy statements of the Town Plan: the historic downtown business district and the airport. Several policies call for the provision of utility and transportation facilities in a form that supports economic development, although no areas are specifically mentioned. Similarly, a policy encourages mixed-use development, although the downtown is the only area identified for that type of development.

**Accomplishments:** The Town has created a viable and attractive historic downtown. This has been accomplished through two historic district overlays. The H-1 and H-2 overlays provide a set of design standards for development in the historic district and for the corridors that lead to the district. For example, the area near the airport in which is as an important economic engine has developed in a way that is not compatible for continued economic growth of the airport.

There have been several accomplishments related to transportation. The Town has partnered with the County to provide commuter bus services to the eastern employment hubs. The Town and County have also assisted in providing local bus service. Of particular note is the Safe-T-Ride, which is a people mover between across the Route 15 Bypass and Edwards Ferry Road. Another accomplishment is the Leesburg Trolley. Scheduled to begin late fall of 2004, this service will provide a link between the outlet mall and the historic downtown district. The Town has not been able to accomplish a transportation network design that can support mixed-use development and multiple modes of transportation.

**Related Community Issues and Comments:** Many participants at the public meetings also identified the downtown and airport as special places for economic development efforts. Specific comments saw economic development in downtown as tourism (specialty shopping, restaurants), cultural (entertainment, performing arts), government (courts, offices), and downtown resident (convenience shopping) related. The airport was seen as a generator of economic development on the airport itself and on adjacent properties. Development around the airport was seen not only as taking advantage of the transportation facilities of the airport and the Dulles Greenway but also as a buffer area for safety and noise reasons that is not appropriate for residential development.

In addition to those two places, participants often cited Leesburg Plaza on East Market Street and the Barber and Ross site (Harrison near Catoctin Circle) as being in need of redevelopment.

Some participants mentioned the need for careful economic development of the Crescent District (bordering Town Branch in the southeastern quadrant of the Town), Route 7 east of the Bypass, the Sheetz area (Edwards Ferry Road at the Bypass), Catoctin Circle (presumably in the southeastern quadrant), and the Town Hall expansion site (Loudoun Street).

**Conclusion:** There was much community input addressing a variety of sectors in the Town's economic structure, and the public comments are in line with the Town Plan's goals and objectives. Although the land use element of the Town Plan does provide much more discussion of the location of economic development, the lack of such discussion in the economic development element misses the opportunity to identify the advantages and disadvantages of various areas relative to their potential for development by different economic sectors.

Of particular importance is the issue of redevelopment. Citizens at the public meetings recognized the opportunities for economic development that redevelopment can take advantage of. In many cases, public comments recognized that redevelopment meant tearing down whatever buildings might exist and replacing them with more appropriate and even larger buildings (although some comments did express concern that this development not be too intense). However, for the historic downtown, citizens gave a virtually unanimous opinion that infill rather than rebuilding was the acceptable way to accommodate economic growth; and here, more so than in other parts of Town, the intensity of building was especially a concern, with the County building cited as an example of being too large a building. Similarly, the design of redevelopment/infill was a concern in all places, but especially so in the downtown.

It is important that the new plan acknowledge the demands that people have for economic development within the existing historic fabric of downtown and the care that must be taken if any or all of them are to succeed. The mixed-use section of historic downtown is very small, and all of the competing interests for space for government, government-related offices and agencies, specialty shopping, convenience shopping, entertainment, visitor accommodation, and residences, not to mention parking, probably cannot be met. Vacant and underutilized lots and second and third stories in existing buildings could probably absorb a surprising amount of demand for space; but the Town may need to assess more carefully what is appropriate mix of uses for the downtown in order to arrive at meaningful policies and an effective implementation program. The recent public debate about the conversion of the Laurel Brigade Inn to law offices is an example of the competing economic interests and the delicate nature of the mix of uses in the downtown. The idea of mixed uses is found in the Town Plan (more so in the land use than in the economic development element) and that was much discussed in the sector and visioning meetings.

People recognize the value of mixed areas, such as the historic downtown, and the more-or-less-successful modern attempts at mixed use in the area (such as those visited by the Planning Commission last winter, including Kentlands, Washingtonian Center, and the Market Common at Clarendon). Mixed-use developments offer a wide range of benefits, from reduced traffic congestion and air pollution, to greater diversity of housing choices, to healthier lifestyles and more successful businesses. What has become clear as mixed-use centers have been developed across the country in recent years is that, in order to achieve the greatest benefits, the community must carefully decide what it means by mixed-use, where are they to be located, what are appropriate designs for private buildings and public spaces, and how the government participates in the development of the centers.

Considerable undeveloped land borders Route 7 east of the Bypass. The Town Plan and meeting participants called for that corridor to be available for corporate business facilities. The volume of traffic on the road suggests that the appropriate development there is commercial development; the nearby wastewater treatment plant and Leegate industrial area suggest industrial development; the existing businesses farther east on Route 7 suggest campus-style high technology/bio-technology/education uses; the current market suggests housing and regional retail uses; and a developer has proposed an intensive mixed-use center for one property at the southwestern corner of the intersection of Route 7 and proposed Crosstrail Boulevard. The Plan should dictate what the identity of this corridor should be.

Finally, considerable agreement exists on the opportunities for economic growth presented by Leesburg Executive Airport. However, recent Town decisions have not supported the Plan's policies for the area, and much of the potential for economic growth lies in the large undeveloped properties outside of the Town boundary. Also, the Airport Commission is still in the process of deciding on a runway improvement plan that may affect development limitations on adjacent properties.

**Recommendation:** The economic element of the new town plan should address all of the major places that have the most potential for non-residential development. Further, the element should provide as specific guidance as possible about the type of economic development that should occur. In order to accomplish these two recommendations, the Planning Commission will need pertinent data and sufficient time to analyze and discuss the options. The upcoming scenario process should be designed to address at least some of those options.

### Salaries and Housing Affordability

Two goals of the economic element of the Town Plan call for a diversified employment base and for the creation of job opportunities for the present and future needs of the Town. That in turn relates to the concept of a jobs/housing balance (where the number of jobs located in a community is balanced with enough housing opportunities for workers, affordable at the various wage levels that are paid in the community) mentioned in the economic element. The element does not explain the idea in detail, and it is not included in the element's objectives or implementation program.

**Accomplishments:** No Town led accomplishments are evident regarding the creation of a diversified employment. As previously stated, there are no explanations on what is defined as a diversified employment base and how the creation of creating such an employment base can be implemented. Essentially, until the recent Town Plan meetings this issue was not a factor in the last seven years of the Town Council's land use decision making.

**Related Community Issues and Comments:** Several comments at the sector and visioning meetings similarly promoted the need for Leesburg to accommodate a wide range of jobs.

However, a few public comments went further, seeking for example "better jobs and higher wages" and "high tech jobs for residents." Several comments related to the need housing affordable for a range of incomes.

**Conclusion:** The desire for better paying jobs recognizes both the economic development market in the County and the expensive housing market. However, the call for a diverse economic structure, an attempt to create stability during market fluctuations, also accepts the reality that moderate- and low-



wage jobs must accompany that diversity in businesses. Similarly, certain desirable economic sectors, most notably tourism and retail, create primarily low paying jobs. A very useful concept that addresses one of the major implications of a range of employment opportunities—providing a range of housing opportunities—is the jobs/housing balance. A jobs/housing balance also becomes a recruitment tool, as employers in new and expanding businesses seek locations with convenient and affordable housing opportunities for their workers, in addition to helping with other community goals related to reduced traffic congestion and air pollution, improved quality of life, and the general idea of a balanced and sustainable community.

**Recommendation:** The economic element of the new town plan should address the implications of the both the higher wage jobs and the lower- and moderate-wage jobs that will result from economic development efforts. This should include a strong statement and specific action plan supporting a jobs housing balance. Again, the upcoming scenario process should be designed to address at least some of those options. As shown on page 19 the Town has an acceptable balance of jobs to ration but not jobs to housing prices.

### Government Role

All six of the economic development goals suggest that the Town's government has several roles to play in economic development. Those roles range from supporting the efforts of the private sector to ensuring that economic development occurs in specific ways that accomplish various other aspirations. One objective specifically states that Town government should take an "active and constructive role . . . economic development," but it is worth looking more closely at what that implies.

The supporting role for the Town is spelled out in about half of the economic objectives. General support is sought through fostering a good relationship between Town government and the business community, and maintaining an attractive physical environment and quality of life. Several objectives call for a more active but still supporting role. Those objectives seek the provision of sufficient utility and transportation infrastructure, adequate land supply and financial resources, and Town revenues to fund adequate public service levels and public facilities. In the same vein, two objectives call for marketing efforts—to use the skills of the local work force as a marketing tool and to capitalize on existing employment strengths to attract additional development. All of those can be described as being business-friendly. However, to accomplish several goals requires the Town to make other, more focused efforts, some of which might not seem to be business-friendly at the time they are undertaken. Those goals specify not just economic growth, but a diversified economic base; not just more jobs but jobs that meet the Town's needs. One objective gets to the heart of the matter when it calls for recruiting businesses "that are compatible with town objectives."

**Accomplishments:** Town government has taken a leadership role in economic development through the creation of staff support for economic development, the support of various economic development bodies, and promotion and marketing of Leesburg as a tourist center. This is further detailed in the "Summary of Other Plans' Guidance on Economic Development" section of the paper. The Town has not been selective in the type of development it has approved in the past and therefore many opportunities have been lost to retail and residential uses.

**Related Community Issues and Comments:** The roles of Town government in the comments at the public meetings were in line with those expressed in the Town Plan's goals and objectives.

Comments included calls for general, supportive activities (“develop a business friendly community,” “make process easier for new businesses to locate in Leesburg,” “attracting and keeping employment in Leesburg,” and “we need to bring in new business for new revenues”). But most of the comments called for special types of economic development, requiring the Town’s intervention to change the market toward Town objectives; those comments covered concerns about specific sectors of the economy, the types of jobs needed, and special locational opportunities or problems, as discussed in previous subsections of this paper.

**Conclusion:** If the Town is to take an active and constructive role in economic development and to manage that development so that it is compatible with Town objectives, it must make choices about what industrial sectors, types of jobs, and development locations it will support. It also requires the Town to express those objectives and develop a program to implement them. Among the economic development goals and objectives, only a few are expressed—a viable historic downtown business district; Leesburg as the County’s government center; the Town as a tourist, conference, and a commercial center; and the airport as an important piece of the Town’s economic development infrastructure. The implementation program will have to specify organizational structures and functions, regulations, and probably incentives that can overcome any market conditions that inhibit the kind of development that the Town wants for its future. The new town plan should be specific in its direction and balance short-term need versus long-term investment.

**Recommendation:** The economic element of the new town plan should provide specific guidance about the roles that the Town government should undertake.

### Summary of Other Plans’ Guidance on Economic Development

In addition to the 1997 Town Plan, three other plans are important for consideration as the Town prepares the economic development element of its new town plan. Those plans are “A Business Development Strategy for Leesburg, Virginia,” the economic development chapter of the Loudoun County General Plan, and “The Community’s Plan for a Thriving and Sustainable Economy.”

The Town’s Economic Development Commission oversaw the writing of “A Business Development Strategy for Leesburg, Virginia,” which Town Council endorsed in May 2003.

The report concentrates on the downtown, which is defined as “any of the older commercial districts inside the bypass,” but includes analysis and recommendations for the entire Town.

The heart of the report is five strategies, with implementing activities classified as immediate, short-term, and long-term. The strategies are:

- **Hometown Downtown**—downtown becomes a gathering place for residents, who can find entertainment, dining, and shopping opportunities there. Implementation includes a marketing strategy to attract residents to downtown businesses, the building of an arts center downtown, and recruitment of retail businesses serving residents and workers.
- **Visitor Experience**—the Town coordinates a series of activities that expands upon the resources of the historic district and improves Leesburg’s image as a visitor destination.
- **Expanding Downtown**—redevelopment is planned and facilitated for the Market East (Rt. 7 between Dodona Manor and the Bypass) and the Crescent District (generally following Tuscarora Creek between Liberty Street and Catoctin Circle, seen on page 10).

- A New Market for Leesburg—various marketing and planning steps are taken to promote Leesburg, with its historic core, as a good place to establish a new business, including related improvements such as a greenway system and additional housing opportunities downtown.
- Leesburg Heritage—the Town’s historic district is a key asset for economic development, and activities are presented that will help to preserve historic buildings, improve the aesthetics of streetscapes, and market the Leesburg’s heritage for tourism.
- Organizing for the Future—the Town becomes an active partner in economic development, facilitated by a new downtown manager and an Economic Development Commission that is refocused on Town-wide development.

The economic development chapter of the Loudoun County General Plan (last amended in January 2003) includes two sets of policies, for economic development generally and for tourism. Most of the economic development policies either support general issues related to economic development (such as seeking a diverse economic base, encouraging high-quality public education, and providing an adequate amount of land) or address issues and areas not directly related to Leesburg (supporting the expansion of Dulles Airport and encouraging growth in the Rt. 28 tax district). Two policies are more important to Leesburg in that they recognize areas such as incorporated towns and the corridors leading to them (in Leesburg’s case, Rt. 7 and the Dulles Greenway being the most important) where the County makes efforts to support appropriate development. Among the possible efforts listed are “regulatory and incentive-based aesthetic enhancement and environmental protection of business corridors, communities and gateways. For this purpose it may use incentives such as density credits, property tax credits, adjustments in zoning or other requirements, and priority processing of applications.”

The County’s economic development chapter includes an additional eight policies for tourism. Again, most of the policies pertain to tourism generally in the County, including the promotion of the County as a destination, development of a unified tourism sign network, and the support of vocational training. One policy refers specifically to Leesburg, calling for improvements to such gateways to the County as the Leesburg Airport, as well as Rt. 7 and Dulles Greenway; that policy also explicitly calls for cooperation between the County and incorporated towns.

The economic development chapter of the General Plan also mentions the county’s strategy for economic development, “The Community’s Plan for a Thriving and Sustainable Economy,” which was prepared by the County’s Economic Development Commission and adopted by the Board of Supervisors in November 2000. The strategy comprises four principles and five goals. The most relevant to Leesburg is the principle that calls for “coordinating with Loudoun’s incorporated Towns and rural economic sectors to achieve balanced policy making, planning and monitoring for the successful implementation of the economic development strategy.” Among the activities to implement each of the goals are statements such as “support Loudoun’s Towns in their business development efforts.”

Insert Map 1 here

**Accomplishments:** There have been several accomplishments of note through the above-mentioned plans. The “Business Development Strategy for Leesburg,” has provided a step-by-step process in how the Town can promote and expand the historic downtown district. The County has also provided several policies that consider regulatory and incentive based efforts to provide aesthetic enhancements of the Town’s business corridors, specifically, Route 7, Dulles Greenway, and the promotion of a tourism sign network.

**Conclusion:** The Town’s business strategy includes many general ideas and specific action items that would be worth incorporating into the new town plan. Similarly, the County’s economic development planning supports many of the Town’s current policies and calls clearly for cooperation with the Town.

**Recommendation:** The new town plan should incorporate the Town’s business strategy by reference. The new plan should also emphasize cooperation with the County. More importantly it should incorporate the strategies into and across all elements of the new town plan.

## Existing Conditions, Trends, and Changes

### Regional Economic Factors

Much of the town’s economic growth can be traced to three factors: its location with the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region, the presence of aviation facilities in the County and Town, and the higher educational infrastructure in Loudoun County.

**Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Region:** Located on the edge of the metropolitan region of the nation’s capital, Leesburg and Loudoun County benefit from the Washington area’s burgeoning economy.

In addition to absorbing new and larger federal agencies and attracting the headquarters of businesses and organizations that do business with the federal government, metropolitan Washington, D. C., has become one of the nation’s leading destinations for technology companies over the past 10 years. Northern Virginia captured three-fourths of the region’s net new jobs in the 1990s. Of those new jobs, 40 percent occurred in Fairfax County, and more than 14 percent occurred in Loudoun County.

The region has more than 2,300 science and technology firms that employ 330,000 people in information technology, systems integration, software development, biotechnology/life sciences, telecommunications, aerospace, and other high-tech fields. Nearly 60 percent of all internet traffic now flows through Northern Virginia, much of it due to the Loudoun-based technology companies such as America Online and Network Solutions. Loudoun’s growth in technology sales revenue during 1999 and 2000 was over \$1.2 billion, exceeding that of the rest of Northern Virginia, where sales growth totaled \$1.1 billion. Loudoun County’s attractiveness is not limited to information technology companies. In the year 2000, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute announced plans to build a \$500 million biomedical center in the County that will employ 300 scientists in the first phase.

The Loudoun County Department of Economic Development has identified several parts of the county where science and technology firms are encouraged to locate. The most significant one for Leesburg is the Route 7 corridor, which the Department has dubbed the “Learning Corridor” because of the existing research and educational institutions located east of Town.

**Aviation:** One of the largest contributing factors to the County's economic development gains of the past decade is the presence of Washington Dulles International Airport, which was designated the fastest growing of the world's 50 largest airports in 2000. However, the growth in scheduled passenger service experienced during the 1990s came to a halt after September 11, 2001. The amount of passenger service has only recently regained the level that existed before the terrorist attacks.

Since September 11, 2001, the big growth in air traffic at Dulles has been in general aviation, which includes business and corporate aviation. The federal government closed Reagan National Airport to general aviation after September 11, and airplane operators began operating out of Dulles International, as well as to Leesburg Executive Airport and other regional airports. In 2002, the general-aviation movements at Dulles skyrocketed to 146,135, and in the 12 months ending July 31, 2003, they had reached 150,594. That generated approximately \$3.7 billion in revenue for the airport and \$293 million in state and local taxes.

Leesburg Executive Airport is located a mile from downtown Leesburg and, located next to the Dulles Greenway, is convenient to businesses in eastern Loudoun and Fairfax counties. As its name implies, the Leesburg Airport serves corporate business travel on private jets, although it also accommodates recreational and other personal travel needs in small aircraft. The Federal Aviation Administration has designated the airport as a reliever airport for Dulles International—when air traffic at that airport is at capacity, all private, small charter, and cargo flights can land at Leesburg Airport.

In addition to the businesses generated by the airport itself—including piston and turbine maintenance; sales of fuel, parts, and aircraft; aircraft storage; and small charter and private jet services—the airport could serve as anchor for economic development nearby. Light manufacturing and office would benefit from being located adjacent to the airport. Conversely, because of noise and safety issues around the runway, residential development is not suitable close to the airport. With the eventual construction of Battlefield Parkway and its interchange with Dulles Greenway (south of the Tolbert Road), the airport and the land around it will become even more accessible and therefore more important in the economic development of the Town. Both Dulles and Leesburg airports are contemplating significant improvements. Dulles will be adding runways; Leesburg will be realigning its runway and upgrading its instrument landing equipment.

Finally, the Federal Aviation Administration has a significant presence in Leesburg. Located on Route 7 just east of the Route 7/15 Bypass, the FAA is the only major federal installation in the Town. The FAA has 700 employees in the Leesburg office, making the third largest employer in Town.

**Education:** The Washington, D. C., metropolitan region has one of the most educated workforces in the country. There are more four year and graduate degrees offered than any other metropolitan area.

**Figure 1: Local Higher Education Institutions**

	Location	Students
Shenandoah University	Leesburg	250
Strayer College	Ashburn	150
Marymount University	Sterling	3,862
George Washington University	Sterling	150
Mary Baldwin College	Sterling	50
Northern Virginia Community College	Sterling	500
Old Dominion University	Sterling	500

Source: Leesburg Economic Development Department

Several institutions of higher learning have opened campuses in the County to serve its workforce, as shown in figure 1. All are located on Route 7 east of Leesburg, creating a higher education corridor for Northern Virginia. Those institutions provide a variety of undergraduate and graduate degree and certification programs. In addition, they provide specialized training and research opportunities on campus or at corporate locations, as well as evening, weekend, and on-line courses for working professionals.

## Economic Sectors

This section presents data on Leesburg's economy. It begins with an overview that categorizes businesses located in the Town and the types of jobs in those businesses; it also describes the residents of Leesburg in terms of the types of occupations they hold. Projections of job growth in the Town are also presented. Following the overview is a detailed discussion of the important sectors of the Town's economy.

**Overview:** Leesburg's economy can be described in terms of the occupations held by Leesburg residents. The number and size of businesses located here and the number of people employed here are also good descriptors.

Figure 2 presents the types of industries in which Leesburg residents were employed between 1990 and 2000. In 2000, the largest percentages of the Town's residents were employed in professional, educational, health, and retail industries. The smallest percentages were employed in the agricultural, forestry, and mining industries.

**Figure 2: Employment of Leesburg Residents, by Industry Type**

In terms of change over the last decade, employment of the town's residents has significantly moved from the manufacturing and agricultural industries to professional and management, education and health, and arts and entertainment industries.

	# 1990	% 1990	# 2000	% 2000
Agriculture, forestry, and mining	197	2.1	65	0.4
Construction	845	8.8	1,072	6.9
Manufacturing	924	9.6	755	4.9
Wholesale trade	426	4.4	380	2.4
Retail trade	1,483	15.4	1,699	10.7
Transportation	467	7.1	1,024	6.6
Information	429	4.5	1,412	9.1
Finance, real estate	841	8.8	1,110	7.1
Professional, scientific, management, and administrative	701	7.3	2,544	16.4
Educational, health and social services	1,125	11.7	2,534	15.2
Arts, entertainment, recreation accommodation and food service	72	.7	1,063	6.8
Public administration	951	9.9	1,282	8.3
Other	1,145	11.9	730	4.7
Total	9,606	100.0	15,535	100.0

Source: 2003 Annual Loudoun Growth Summary; MWCOC Activity Centers Report

That same pattern is illustrated in the occupations by profession of Leesburg residents, shown in Figure 3. Figures 2 and 3 offer a snapshot of a diverse labor force already residing in Leesburg.

**Figure 3: Occupations of Leesburg Residents by Profession  
(Employed, 16 years and older)**

	# 1990	% 1990	# 2000	% 2000
Management, Professional	3,200	33.3	7,523	48.4
Service Occupations	1,081	11.2	1,961	12.6
Sales and Office Occupations	3,483	36.2	3,977	25.6
Farming, Forestry	200	2.0	18	0.1
Construction, Maintenance	958	9.9	1,032	6.6
Production and Transportation	684	7.1	1,024	6.6
Total Employees	9,606	100	15,355	100

2003 Annual Loudoun Growth Summary

**Figure 4: Leesburg Major Employers, 1996-2000**

Employers	1996		2000	
	Rank	Number of Employees	Rank	Number of Employees
Loudoun County Government	1	868	1	1,900
Loudoun Hospital Center	2	589	*	*
Loudoun County Schools	3	800	2	1,800
Federal Aviation Administration	4	578	3	700
Town of Leesburg	8	150	4	320
Giant Food	7	164	5	300
Barber and Ross	5	276	6	250
State Government	6	181	*	*
Home Depot			7	200
Rehau	11	122	8	190
Wal-Mart	9	145	9	150
Southern Electric	10	132	*	*
K-Mart	12	111	*	*
Hechingers	13	110	*	*
Bell Atlantic	14	108	*	*
Heritage Hall Nursing	15	100	10	135
Food Lion			11	120

\*Denotes no longer employing employees of a 100 or more

Source: Town of Leesburg Economic Development Department

The largest employers located in the Town are federal, county, and town governments, as shown in Figure 4. Though the government sector numbers will decrease when the school board offices relocate to Ashburn in the near future, the school district will still be the second largest employer in the Town. Almost all of the remaining major employers were retail establishments, with several having been added to the list in 2000.



The exceptions are Barber and Ross, a windows manufacturer and installer which has announced its intention to move from the Town, and Rehau, a defense contractor that specializes in plastics. Two significant employers in 1990 that employed less than 100 people in 2000 were the state government and the hospital.

When looking at the types of jobs in Leesburg in 2003, as shown in Figure 5, the number of service jobs is striking. Retail jobs are the second most prominent type offered in Leesburg, and these figures do not reflect the recent opening of Target and Costco.

**Figure 5: Types of Jobs in Leesburg, 2003**

Type	Number
Services	10,600
Retail	4,200
Public Administration	1,800
Finance/Insurance	1,300
Construction	700
Transportation	600
Manufacturing	400
Other	300
Total	21,000

Source: Town Economic Development Department

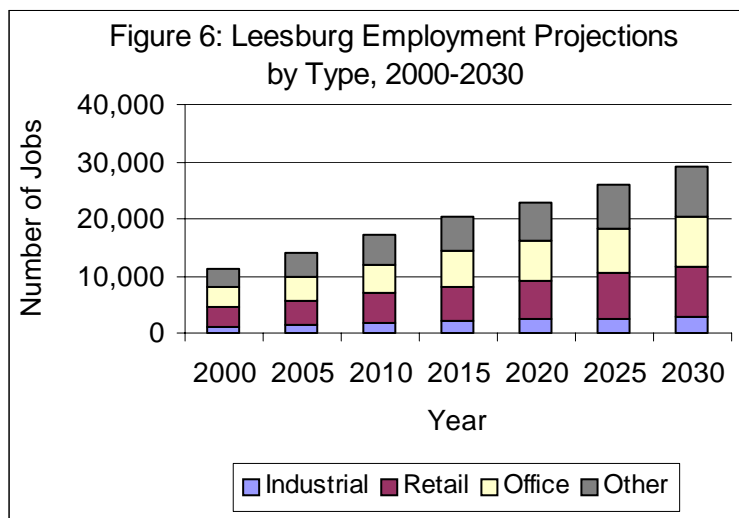


Figure 6 is a bar graph showing the County's employment projections for the Town between the years 2000 and 2030. The projections are based on the County's intermediate forecast and with the consideration that Leesburg will retain about 25 percent of the County's total employment. The projections optimistically show adding more than a third to the employment base of 21,000 to 34,000 by 2030. The fulfillment of such a projection is not automatic. Loudoun's 2003 annual growth summary already indicates that the Town already contains approximately 50 percent of Loudoun's retail, office, and industrial building space and is poised to add an additional 4.5 million square feet. Given the small amount of space left in the Town the employment projected could not occur without rezoning and intentensity changes to the Town's current land use.

**Retail:** Currently, one the Town's economic strengths reside in retail development. As calculated by the Economic Development Department, there were over 411 retail establishments in the Leesburg with combined annual sales of \$607 million in 2003. The retailers employ approximately 5,000 people thus making retail a major component of Leesburg's economy. Leesburg contains approximately 25 percent of Loudoun's retail space. According to a study completed by the Economic Development Department in 2002, local residents accounted for only 13 percent of the customers of downtown stores; tourists were the largest group of customers, accounting for 87 percent.

Leesburg's other major retail areas reside the fringes of downtown, along East Market Street (Rt. 7), U.S. 15 Bypass, and Business 15 south. The Town has approved several retail developments that have not yet been built, in particular, Leesburg Commons, Catoctin Circle Center, and the redevelopment of the Kmart site at Leesburg Plaza. The attached shopping centers map shows the location of Leesburg's retail centers. In addition, a classification has been assigned to each center that indicates the type of center it is.

**Figure 7: Leesburg Shopping Centers**

<b>Retail Center</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Existing (square feet)</b>	<b>Approved (square feet)</b>	<b>Total (square feet)</b>
Battlefield Shopping Center	Regional	297,600	0	297,600
Battlefield Market Place	Regional	393,865	0	393,865
Bellwood Commons	Community	62,000	0	62,000
Fort Evans Plaza	Community	345,284	0	345,284
Leesburg Outlets	Regional	463,000	0	463,000
Leesburg Park	Convenience	30,000	0	30,000
Leesburg Plaza	Community	249,000	0	249,000
Market Station	Regional	30,000	0	30,000
Potomac Station	Community	104,748	128,252	233,000
Prosperity Center	Convenience	64,448	0	64,448
Shenandoah Square	Community	127,000	0	127,000
Tollhouse Center	Community	33,000	0	33,000
Virginia Village	Community	140,000	0	140,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		2,239,9454	128,252	2,468,197

Source: 2003 Annual Loudoun Growth Summary

**Insert Shopping Center Map Here**

**Office and Industry:** These sectors of the Town's economy have been volatile since the 1997 Town Plan was adopted. In 1996, 4 of the 15 major employers were from this sector. As shown in figure 4, 2 out of 11 are remaining, with one (Barber and Ross) in the process of relocating. The other remaining industry (Rehau Corp.) has added almost 70 additional employees.

Figure 8 lists the 4 major office and research and development centers with existing and approved square footage in Town.

**Figure 8: Major Office and Research and Development Centers  
(Over 100,000 Square Feet)**

	Total Acres	Existing (square feet)	Approved (square feet)	Total (square feet)
Leegate	137	155,000	778,000	933,000
Potomac Station	4	0	110,000	110,000
Leesburg Commons	158	0	1,500,000	1,500,000
Oaklawn at Stratford	168	0	1,538,000	1,538,000
Total	463	155,000	3,926,000	3,926,155

Source: "2003 Annual Loudoun Growth Summary"

What this table indicates is that

Leesburg is prepared to capture a large portion of the Northern Virginia technology market with nearly 4,000,000 square feet available. More importantly half this space is located in the Route 7 "Learning Corridor" which is will be able to compliment and support existing research and educational institutions located east of Town. What this table does not include are the small office developments scattered throughout the Town.

**Tourism:** The tourism sector is an important sector of the Leesburg economy. Its location to natural beauty, historic character, recreation, increasing cultural, and shopping opportunities are a natural draw for both visitors and residents.

Two organizations, the Town's Economic Development Commission and the Loudoun County Visitors Association are actively engaged in promoting the Leesburg/Loudoun County area as a destination for travelers, tourists, and recreation. The main objective is to market Leesburg as the center of arts and entertainment in western Loudoun. The town is using the branding slogan "Leesburg at the Crossroads" in an effort to promote Leesburg's assets.

A market study conducted in October 2002 for the Business Development Strategy report counted customers in downtown businesses and found that 21 percent of the visits are coming from the Town itself, 79 percent of the customers were from out of Town with the majority (32 percent) visiting from Northern Virginia. This indicates that downtown is already a strong tourist anchor, although it is not providing services for the local population.

## Leesburg's Jobs and Housing Balance

The jobs/housing balance is an attempt to find the appropriate mix of employment and residences in a community. It is usually measured in terms of the ratio of the number of jobs and the number of dwellings, but it also goes beyond that ratio to address affordability, to match the wages of those jobs with the cost of available housing. A balance of jobs and housing is important to economic development from two perspectives.

**Figure 9: Jobs and Salaries in Leesburg**  
(Based on Metropolitan Washington Data for Salaries and Housing Costs)

Type of Jobs	Number of Jobs	Examples				
		Positions	Median Salary (2003)	Percent of \$89,139 <sup>1</sup> (2003)	Percent of \$39,354 <sup>2</sup> (2003)	Percent of \$46,155 <sup>3</sup> (2003)
Services	10,600	Administrative Assistant	\$38,570	43%	98%	84%
		Fast Food Cook	\$16,130	18%	41%	35%
		Registered Nurse	\$57,860	65%	147%	125%
		Police Officer	\$46,870	53%	119%	102%
		Fire Fighter	\$39,870	45%	101%	86%
		Elementary School Teacher	\$43,920	49%	112%	95%
		Secondary School Teacher	\$46,290	52%	118%	100%
Retail	4,200	Retail Salesperson	\$18,950	21%	48%	41%
Public Administration	1,800	Librarian	\$55,700	62%	142%	121%
		Urban Planner	\$62,180	70%	158%	135%
Finance/ Insurance	1,300	Bank Teller	\$22,280	25%	57%	48%
		Loan Officer	\$52,360	59%	133%	113%
		Bookkeeping Clerk	\$32,310	36%	82%	70%
		Accountant	\$54,710	61%	139%	119%
Construction	1,100	Carpenter	\$35,920	40%	91%	78%
		Electrician	\$46,180	52%	117%	100%
		Construction Manager	\$72,180	81%	183%	156%
Transportation	700	Automobile Mechanic	\$37,790	42%	96%	82%
		Delivery Truck Driver	\$27,350	31%	69%	59%
		Long-haul Truck Driver	\$33,850	38%	86%	73%
Manufacturing	600	Assembly-line Worker	\$21,590	24%	55%	47%
		Machinist	\$33,110	37%	84%	72%
		Stock Clerk	\$20,280	23%	52%	44%
Agriculture	400	Farm Worker	\$20,250	23%	51%	44%
Other	300					
<sup>1</sup> Salary needed to afford purchase of a median-priced home (\$286,000).						
<sup>2</sup> Salary needed to afford rental of a median-priced 1-bedroom apartment (\$984/month).						
<sup>3</sup> Salary needed to afford rental of a median-priced 2-bedroom apartment (\$1,154/month).						

Source: Leesburg Economic Development Department; Center for Housing Policy, "Paycheck to Paycheck--2003"

The first is the labor pool, an important factor for retaining existing businesses and recruiting new ones. Businesses that can find employees within an easy commute of work will have more dependable arrival times at work and more relaxed employees, not to mention cleaner air, less traffic congestion, and better quality of life. The second perspective is the customer base, especially important businesses offerings, goods, and services geared toward the community market. The local drug store, grocery, and other convenience shopping destinations are just a few of the businesses that rely on a small market area for most of their customers.

The concept of a jobs/housing balance is complicated by many factors, not the least of which is the multiple issues that each household weighs as it decides where to locate. But as a planning tool that provides the opportunity that otherwise would not exist, a jobs/housing balance is an important consideration in economic development efforts.

Robert Cervero, a professor the University of California at Berkeley who specializes in transportation issues, has determined that an appropriate jobs/housing balance is within the range of 1.3 to 1.7 jobs for each residence. Leesburg, with 21,000 jobs and 12,800 dwelling units in 2003, has an acceptable ratio of 1.6.

However, there is a mismatch between the salaries paid to employees and the price of housing in the Town. Figure 9 provides some examples of the jobs found in Leesburg and the ability of those employees to afford to buy a home, rent a 1-bedroom apartment, or rent a 2-bedroom apartment, affordability is based on median salaries and housing costs figures for the Washington metropolitan region. None of the employees shown in the table can afford to purchase a median-priced home, although most of the skilled employees can afford to rent. As an additional example, a general manager (who could be categorized as many of the types of jobs listed in the table) could almost afford to buy the median-priced house and could afford to rent either sized apartment on his \$83,860 salary.

The following 3 figures are related to commuting to the work place. This is an important consideration when trying to understand the jobs housing balance.

**Figure 10: Means of Transport to Employment for Employed Leesburg Residents**

	Public Transportation	Car, Truck or Van	% Who Drove Alone	Car Pooled	Walked/Bicycle	Worked at Home
<b>2000</b>	0.7%	97%	89%	11%	2%	4.6%
<b>1990</b>	0.8%	94%	84%	15%	5%	2%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Censuses, SF3 Data File

As stated previously, businesses whose can find employees within an easy commute of work will have more dependable arrival times at work and more relaxed employees, not to mention less traffic congestion and better quality of living. Figure 10 and 11 indicate however that most Leesburg residents' work outside of their place of residence and most them are commuting by car and are alone.

Figure 12 also indicates that 45 percent of the residents are commuting 30 minutes or more with 23 percent of them commuting an hour or longer. This commuting time is costly and not an asset for quality of living. Another interesting item located in figure 10 is the decrease in the amount of resident's car-pooling to work. The

**Figure 11: Location of Resident Employment**

	Leesburg 1990	Leesburg 2000	Loudoun County 2000
Work in state	8,819	13,970	81,358
Work outside state	701	1,370	10,957
Work in county	5,619	8,336	38,321
Work outside county	3,200	5,634	43,037
Work in place of residence	3,668	5,019	5,594
Total	9,520	15,340	92,315

Source: 1990 & 2000 U.S. Census

assumption may have been that since 67 percent of the Leesburg residents are employed outside of their place of residence (compared to 60 percent in 1990), car-pooling would have increased; however, it has declined 4 percent. Also, though more residents are commuting in town than 1990, walking or biking to work has decreased 3 percent. Again, in theory this should have increased.

**Figure 12: Time Spent in Travel to Work for Leesburg Residents**

	<15 Minutes	15-30 Minutes	30-45 Minutes	45 Minutes - 1 Hour	1-1.5 Hours	>1.5 Hours	Total Number of Employees
2000	27%	28%	22%	13%	8%	2%	15,340
1990	36%	19%	22%	11%	9%	2%	9,520

Source: 1990 and 2000 Censuses, SF3 data

## Leesburg's Fiscal Policy

The effect of economic development on the fiscal health of the Town is an important issue for Leesburg. The 1997 Town Plan includes a goal that refers to the connection between the two. The issue is most specifically addressed in one of the seven objects in the land use element of the Plan, "Encourage growth which decreases the residential property taxes to less than 60 percent of all real estate taxes." The intent is to maintain a fair tax burden on residential property owners. There is no universally accepted standard for what the relationship between residential and nonresidential property taxes should be; adjacent jurisdictions such as Fairfax County has a policy of obtaining an 80/20 property tax ratio and Loudoun County has no such policy.

The revenues generated by residential and nonresidential land uses in the Town have recently been calculated, as shown in Figure 13. Those calculations show that the Town is far from the Plan's target of 60 percent residential/40 percent nonresidential real property tax revenues. However, when all other sources of revenue are added to real property taxes (the latter accounting for one-third of total Town revenues), the revenue burden falls to 56 percent for residential land uses and rises to 44 percent for nonresidential land uses.

Figure 13 also provides information on Town expenditures, based on the 2004 budget. As is done throughout the country, the Town's budget relies heavily on nonresidential land uses to contribute revenues in excess of the

**Figure 13: Sources of Revenues and Costs, Fiscal Year 2004**

	Residential		Nonresidential	
	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent
Real Property Taxes	\$ 6,737,700	79 %	\$ 1,820,700	21 %
All Other Revenues	\$11,265,500	48 %	\$12,170,000	52 %
Total Revenues	\$18,003,200	56 %	\$13,990,700	44 %
Costs	\$25,403,100	77 %	\$ 7,572,400	23 %

Source: Leesburg Planning Department, "60/40 Follow-up"

locally incurred costs to serve those land uses. Although the 79/21 real property ratio in the Town's 2004 budget is very close to the 77/23 ratio for costs, the picture is quite different when all revenues are considered. The 56/44 ratio for all revenues, when compared to the 77/23 ratio for expenditures, shows that nonresidential land uses contribute significantly to easing the tax burden on residents.

## Findings: Priority Issues for the New Economic Development Element

The following is a summary of findings and conclusions resulting from the preceding analysis and will be used to give direction to the New Town Plan. This analysis will consider the content and structure of the 1997 Town Plan, the themes recommended by Leesburg's citizens and commissions, the Loudoun County General Plan and other plans, existing conditions, and recent developments in economic development practice. The findings are followed by proposed goals and objectives for the new element.

**Finding:** The current structure of the economic development element of the 1997 Town Plan in general should be retained in the new economic development element. The new element should provide additional background information—in particular, explaining the regional context and providing more detailed information about the industries and jobs in Leesburg—while forgoing some of the discussion in the current element (such as the presentation on resources). Furthermore, care should be taken to present sufficient background information to substantiate the element's goals and objectives.

**Finding:** The current economic development element, public comments, and other economic development plans all agree that Leesburg should actively manage its economic development. The Town will have to understand the needs of businesses for public facilities and services and be willing to be a partner with business. But in addition to being business-friendly in general, the Town must be discriminating in what types of businesses it will make special efforts to help, be selective in where it will encourage those businesses to locate, and be supportive in helping to maintain the quality of life for all workers. To be effective, the Town's economic development efforts will have to be focused on its goals and objectives; to be efficient, those efforts will have to be strategically implemented.



**Finding:** One of the purposes of actively managing economic development is to ensure that the Town remains fiscally healthy—another thing that current plans and public comments agree on. Leesburg, as virtually all American local governments, depends on businesses to provide most of its revenues and thus relieve the tax burden for residents. Business owners expect this and support this as long as they recognize that their taxes and fees result in public facilities and services and a quality of life that helps their businesses survive and grow.

Certain businesses generate much more revenues than other businesses; and some of those revenue-generating businesses also entail direct and direct costs. The retail and tourist businesses that seem so attractive because of the business and professional occupation license tax also can afford to pay wages that are well below a living wage for the area. Further, a Town that is made up of only tax-generating businesses runs the risk of being an unbalanced community—akin to the “dead” downtowns that so many American cities are trying to reconfigure. So economic development decisions must balance the goal of fiscal health with other important community goals. The new economic chapter, with additional material about the Town’s budget in the public facilities element, needs to make clear the factors behind and the implementation options supporting fiscally determined economic development.

**Finding:** The current economic development element, public comments, and other economic development plans all agree that Leesburg should seek a diverse economic base and take advantage of its position in Loudoun County and the Washington region. The “Business Development Strategy for Leesburg” suggests that economic development efforts should be directed at exploiting and enhancing the Town’s historic character to promote tourism (as well as maintain quality of life), designating and protecting the area around Leesburg Executive Airport for compatible development, allowing limited development of regional retail establishments for the tourist and western Loudoun markets, encouraging business start-ups, and extending the County’s efforts along Rt. 7 and the Dulles Greenway into the Town.

**Finding:** The 1997 Town Plan recognizes that land for employment uses is scarce. That recognition is based on the ever-shrinking supply of undeveloped land; although it tends to undervalue the potential that redevelopment offers the Town. In addition to the scarcity is competition for land. Retail developers want to locate on Rt. 7 east of the Bypass with its heavy traffic volumes, while that corridor is a logical extension of the high technology/biotechnology/education cluster that has developed in Ashburn and Sterling. Residential developers are eying the undeveloped acreage around Leesburg Executive Airport, where light industry, office, and research and development make more sense. Government, business and agency offices, tourism-related shopping and dining, resident-supporting services and retail, and residences are all jostling for space in the relatively small historic district. Everywhere but in the downtown, the conventional forms of development are not compatible with the concept of mixed-use development, which is a major aspect of the Town Plan and was a strong desire in the sector and visioning meetings. The new economic development element, with additional information in the land use element, must recognize in its goals and implementation program the scarce resource and the competing interests for that resource.

**Finding:** The plans and public comments address the issue of the labor force. All recognize that an educated work force is needed to attract high-wage employers. Many employers want locations where their employees can find housing nearby.

Ideally (because the result would be a balanced community without the numerous adverse effects of long commutes), the jobs offered by businesses in the Town would match the occupations of the residents. This suggests that economic development cannot be divorced from housing supply and affordability, in particular, and quality of life, in general. In a place with limited land supply and where there are many high-wage jobs, it is difficult to provide housing and quality of life for all employees of a diverse economic base. A variety of housing types and sizes for those with middle and upper incomes, ownership/rental assistance for the working poor, and support services for those with special needs are issues that are inextricable from the Town's economic development efforts. The Town can do much to affect the housing supply, and working toward a jobs/housing balance would be a major effort in that regard. However, since the Town is not in a position to provide many essential services, partnerships with the County, and its education, housing, health, and social services, are critical.

### **Draft Goals and Objectives for the New Economic Development Element**

The goals and objectives of new economic development element should reflect the ambitions expressed in current plans and at public meetings. Those ambitions include a diverse economy, one that is based on the area's economic strengths. Those ambitions must be realized in a community with limited land resources, where economic development must occur in concert with other efforts affecting the quality of life in the Town. All of this suggests that the Town take an active and discriminating part in economic development, as it:

1. Identifies types of businesses for the Town,
2. Makes available zoned land suitable for those types of development, including areas of redevelopment,
3. Supports housing opportunities for those businesses
4. Develops partnerships with the business community and other governmental agencies,
5. Develops a variety of appropriate tools, such as marketing, regulations, staff and programs, financial incentives, to attract desirable new businesses and expansions.
6. Resists short term demands for rezoning non-residential land for residential uses.

#### **Draft Goal**

Leesburg will have actively develop a diversified economy that builds upon the Town's and region's strengths that supports a balanced community with a high quality of life, opportunities for entrepreneurship and well paying jobs, and a strong fiscal condition.

#### **Draft Objectives**

1. To support retail development that meets the needs of the Town's residents for goods and services and that provides shopping and entertainment opportunities for tourists and residents of western Loudoun County.
2. To support tourism development, based on the historical and natural attractions of the Town, that brings new money into the community.

3. To support office and research and development that takes advantage of the telecommunications/high technology/biotechnology/education clusters in the County to provide high-wage-job opportunities.
4. To support the intensification and diversification of business and residential opportunities in the historic downtown while protecting historic buildings and the character of downtown.
5. To support intensive, mixed-use redevelopment opportunities in the Town, such as the Crescent District, Market Street East, Catoctin Circle Southeast, and Leesburg Park/Shenandoah Square.
6. To support the revitalization of the Leesburg Hospital for medical and assisted living uses.
7. To support the intensification of industrial uses in the area of Leegate, with careful attention being given to the design of any new development visible from Rt. 7.
8. To encourage attractive and intensive economic development, including mixed-use development, along the Rt. 7 corridor, providing a gateway into Leesburg.
9. To encourage office and industrial development around the Leesburg Executive Airport, providing a gateway into Leesburg.
10. To encourage redevelopment that does not damage historic resources and is compatible with the Town's land use and natural resource policies.
11. To encourage concentrated and mixed-use development that takes advantage of the Town's available infrastructure and scarce land supply and that is compatible with surrounding land uses.
12. To protect and enhance the Town's economic assets, such as the historic district and the Leesburg Executive Airport.
13. To support desirable economic development by enhancing the quality of life in Leesburg, including adequate and affordable housing, educational and cultural opportunities, attractive buildings and public spaces, and a healthy natural system.
14. To encourage a jobs/housing balance in the Town.
15. To provide the infrastructure (utilities, transportation system, governmental organization and programs) that supports desirable economic development.
16. To participate in public/private partnerships to encourage desirable economic development.